

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04851 301606Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4192

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 4851

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS) SY
SUBJECT: SECSTATE VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST -SYRIA

REF: DAMASCUS 4674, STATE 178429

1. DISCUSSED PROGRAM WITH KHADDAM AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL
JULY 30 AFTER RECEIPT STATE REFTEL.

2. KHADDAM PROPOSED DINNER AUGUST 3. ALL MEMBERS OF OFFICIAL
US PARTY ARE INVITED. SYRIAN GUESTS WILL INCLUDE MINISTER OF
ECONOMY MUHAMMAD IMADI, MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION ALI
HASHEM, MINISTER OF HEALTH MADANI AL-KHIYAMI, MINISTER OF STATE
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABDUL KARIM ADI, FONMINISTRY'S DIRECTOR OF
AMERICAN AFFAIRS HAMOUD SHOUFFI AND DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL MUWAFFAQ
QUDSI. WIVES OF FOREGOING WILL ATTEND. TOTAL INVITEES, INCLUDING
AMBASSADOR AND MRS. MURPHY, DCM AND MRS. PELLETRAU, AMOUNT
TO THIRTY ONE.

3. DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL SUGGESTS THAT SINCE SECRETARY
WILL BE ARRIVING ONE HOUR EARLIER THAN ANTICIPATED HE MAY
WISH PAY USUAL PROTOCOL CALL (30-45) MINUTES ON KHADDAM
AT FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT EVENING. ALTERNATIVELY THIS
COULD BE DONE PRIOR TO WORKING SESSION AT FOREIGN MINISTRY
THE NEXT MORNING. SAID I WOULD CHECK WITH SECRETARY AND
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ADVISE. (COMMENT. AFTER ARRIVAL AT HOTEL THERE WILL BE
TWO HOURS FREE BEFORE DINNER CURRENTLY SET FOR 2030 AT ORIENT
CLUB, TWO MINUTES FROM MERIDIEN HOTEL. THIS DINNER COULD
BE SLIPPED TO 2100L).

4. IT IS THE CUSTOM THAT VISITING FOREIGN MINISTER HOST
RETURN DINNER FOR SYRIAN FONMIN. WE WILL PLAN ARRANGE THIS

AT RESIDENCE AND INCLUDE ENTIRE OFFICIAL PARTY. SUGGESTED TIME 2100 HOURS ON AGUSUT 4 TO ALLOW MAXIMUM TIME FOR SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH ASSAD.

5. I UNDERLINED TO PRESIDENCY, CHIEF OF PROTOCOL AND KHADDAM HIMSELF THAT SECRETARY WISHES DEDICATE MAXIMUM TIME WHEN IN DAMASCUS TO HIS MEETINGS WITH ASSAD. ADDED HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH CARTER THROUGHOUT VISIT. SYRIANS, IN TURN, HAVE STRESSED NEED FOR WORKING SESSION AT FOREIGN MINISTRY PRIOR TO MEETING WITH ASSAD. I HAVE ALSO SAID SECRETARY MAY WISH FURTHER MEETING WITH ASSAD ON MORNING OF AUGUST 5, PRIOR TO TAKEOFF FOR AMMAN, AND HAVE BEEN ASSURED THIS WILL BE ARRANGED IF SECRETARY AFTER HIS AUGUST 4 MEETING SO DESIRES.

6. MRS. VANCE'S SCHEDULE BY SEPTTEL.

7. ACTION REQUESTED:

A. ADVISE WHETHER SECRETARY WOULD PREFER PAY PROTOCOL ON KHADDAM AT FONMINISTRY WEDNESDAY EVENING PRIOR TO DINNER OR COMBINE IT WITH WORKING SESSION NEXT MORNING. CALL WOULD BE IN KHADDAM'S OFFICE; WORKING SESSION UPSTAIRS IN MINISTRY. IF WEDNESDAY EVENING, I SUGGEST WE ASK SYRIAN TO SET KHADDAM DINNER FOR 2100. (SYRIAN OFFICIAL DINNERS BREAK UP EARLY. PARTY CAN EXPECT TO BE BACK AT HOTEL AT LATEST BY 2330.)

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B. ADVISE IF SECRETARY WOULD PLAN MAKE FORMAL TOAST AT DINNER. IN ANSWER KHADDAM'S QUESTION, SAID I THOUGHT SECRETARY WOULD PREFER INFORMAL REMARKS SUCH AS HE AND KHADDAM EXCHANGED AT WASHINGTON DINNER.

C. ADVISE WHETHER AT THIS STAGE IT POSSIBLE PREDICT WHETHER SECRETARY WILL WANT FRIDAY MORNING SESSION WITH ASSAD. IF SO, HE MAY WISH CONSIDER SLIPPING TAEKOFF FOR AMMAN BY ONE HOUR.

MURPHY

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